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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 KATHMANDU 000005

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USAID FOR ANE/AA GORDON WEST AND JIM BEVER
MANILA FOR USAID/DCHA/OFDA
LONDON FOR POL/GURNEY
TREASURY FOR GENERAL COUNSEL/DAUFHAUSER AND DAS JZARATE
TREASURY ALSO FOR OFAC/RNEWCOMB AND TASK FORCE ON TERRORIST
FINANCING
JUSTICE FOR OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL/DLAUFMAN
NSC FOR MILLARD
SECDEF FOR OSD/ISA LILIENFELD

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SUBJECT: UPDATE ON NEPAL'S MAOIST INSURGENCY, DECEMBER 20-
JANUARY 2

REFERENCE: (A) KATHMANDU 2475
(B) KATHMANDU 1391

SUMMARY

1. Thirteen security personnel and forty-two Maoists reportedly were killed in clashes this week. Twenty security personnel and two civilians also suffered injuries. Maoist cadres reportedly killed five civilians, including a pregnant woman, and abducted nine others. On December 25, the Special Court of Nepal again issued a summons for Maoist Supremo Prachanda, while on December 30 the Patan Appellate Court issued summons for five other senior Maoists. Eighty-three insurgents reportedly surrendered throughout Nepal this week, despite Maoist Supremo Prachanda lambasting the Government of Nepal's (GON) "Surrender and Amnesty Policy" (Ref A) as "ridiculous and shameless."

2. Summary Continued. The local press quoted senior government officials on December 23 as saying that India has never cooperated with Nepal on arrests of Maoists, declaring that Ambassador Saran was "uttering a white lie" when he publicly declared his government was committed to helping find the insurgents (Ref A). Maoist cadres continue to form so-called Peoples' Governments in districts throughout Nepal. Villagers defied Maoist orders not to attend GON sponsored programs in several districts. Educational strikes called by the All Nepal National Independent Students' Union-Revolutionary (ANNISU-R), the Maoist-affiliated student organization, have forced additional school closures, affecting over 15,000 students. Maoists reportedly robbed several banks this week, and demanded ransom for detainees in their custody. End Summary.

DEATH TOLL KEEPS CLIMBING

3. Thirteen security personnel reportedly were killed this week. A New Year's Eve ambush in Dhanusa District, in the east, killed a police officer. Later that same day in nearby Sarlahi District, three police officers were injured in a Maoist attack. On December 30, three Royal Nepal Army (RNA) soldiers were killed in the southwestern district of Kapilvastu after Maoist rebels opened fire on their vehicle. An Armed Police Force (APF) officer was killed on December 29 in Kailali District, in the far-western Terai, when a bomb planted on a bus by Maoists exploded during a security check. Two civilians on the bus suffered injuries. On December 26, four RNA soldiers died and eleven suffered injuries after their truck ran over a Maoist-planted landmine in Makwanpur District, south of Kathmandu. Three other soldiers were killed in Kaski District on December 24 in separate incidents, and five security personnel sustained injuries in firefights. Maoists reportedly attacked a police post in Kanchanpur District on December 22, killing one policeman and injuring another.

4. Security forces reportedly killed forty-two Maoists. On December 29, three insurgents were killed in the eastern districts of Dhading and Rautahat, and three others on December 25 in the northeastern district of Dolakha. On December 24, six rebels died in separate clashes in the eastern districts of Taplejung, Dhading and Therathum, and four insurgents in the western district of Salyan. Eighteen Maoists reportedly were killed on December 23. Five died in clashes in the neighboring western districts of Surkhet and Dailekh, and thirteen in the eastern districts of Morang, Taplejung and Dhankuta. A battle on December 22 in the northeastern district of Solukhumbu left seven rebels dead, and a female Maoist commander was killed on December 20 in Udaypur District.

MAOIST CADRES SURRENDER

15. In response to the GON's recent announcement of its "Surrender and Amnesty Policy" (Ref A), Maoist Supremo Prachanda issued a statement on December 19 calling the policy "ridiculous and shameless." Prachanda went on to declare that the invitation by the GON for Maoist cadres to surrender was a ploy to cover up the defeat of security forces.

16. Eighty-three insurgents reportedly surrendered throughout Nepal this week. On December 26, sixty-two Maoists reportedly surrendered to security forces in Lamjung District, stating that they were dissatisfied with the violent and destructive activities of the Maoists. On December 25, seven members of a Maoist sister organization in the eastern district of Khotang surrendered to officials in the District Administration Office. Ten other insurgents surrendered on December 24, seven in the western district of Kalikot, and three others in the eastern district of Sindhuli. On December 22, four Maoist cadres in Saptari District also surrendered.

COURTS SUMMON MAOIST LEADERSHIP

17. On December 25, the Special Court of Nepal again issued a summons for Maoist Supremo Prachanda to appear and respond to charges filed by the Government of Nepal (GON), including the July 2000 attack on a police station in Sindhupalchowk District which left four policemen dead. The Maoist leader has been ordered to appear in court within fifteen days of being served with the summons. Police have been ordered to ensure that Prachanda receives the notice, but no current address has been supplied. This is the second time that the court has issued the summons. Police previously failed to serve the notice.

18. On December 30, the Patan Appellate Court ordered five senior Maoists to appear before the court within seven days. Top Bahadur Rayamajhi, Rabindra Shrestha, Bamdev Chhetri, Barsaman Pun, and Dilip Kumar Sijapati are accused of extortion and terrorist activities in cases filed against them under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act.

GON CLAIMS INDIA "UTTERING A WHITE LIE"

19. GON officials reacted angrily to Indian Ambassador Shyam Saran's recent public statements that India would cooperate and arrest Maoists in India if the GON shared vital information on the Maoists' identities and whereabouts (Ref B). The local press quoted senior government officials as saying that India has never cooperated with Nepal and Ambassador Saran was "uttering a white lie." Several unnamed GON and police officials were quoted as saying that they had provided advance information to the Government of India (GOI) on a number of Maoist meetings in India, including high-level central committee meetings in Gorakhpur in 2001 and Bihar in 2000 and the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) meeting, which politburo members of the Maoists were said to have attended in July 2003 (Ref B). The GON reportedly requested raids on those meetings, but Indian authorities did not respond. In response to those allegations, specifically with respect to the meeting in Gorakhpur, the First Secretary for Press, Information, and Culture at the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu told the local press "no information whatsoever was ever received."

MAOISTS DECLARE PEOPLES' GOVERNMENT

10. Maoist cadres continue to form so-called Peoples' Governments in some districts. The insurgents reportedly have set up committees in the eastern districts of Udayapur, Panchthar, and Sarlahi, and also in the western district of Kapilvastu. Maoist ideologue Baburam Bhattarai has declared repeatedly that the Maoists control eighty percent of Nepal. This claim has been denied vehemently by the GON, which insists that its forces can move into any area of the kingdom they wish.

VILLAGERS DEFY MAOISTS

11. In a rare show of force against the Maoists, local villagers in Bhojpur and Ilam retaliated against insurgents. On December 23, villagers in Bhojpur District severely beat a Maoist commander and a district vice-president of the All Nepal National Independent Students' Union-Revolutionary (ANNISU-R), who had been extorting money from them. In the far eastern district of Ilam, locals reportedly have formed a committee to resist Maoist demands, and have requested

that the local government supply them with sophisticated weapons. Military officials reportedly said they would not provide weapons, but would provide weapons training. According to a December 31 press report, security forces already have supplied training and arms to locals in the eastern district of Sarlahi, who had previously fought successfully against Maoists attempting to abduct the son of a former Village Development Committee (VDC) member. Seventeen villagers reportedly received training, and ten were given guns. Security officials denied that they have provided weapons to anyone.

112. Residents of Dolakha District, in the northeast, defied Maoists orders to attend a mobile camp sponsored by the government. Attendees received medical check-ups, passport services, and citizenship papers. The insurgents had issued an order banning locals from taking part in the program. An estimated 10,000 people took part in a similar program on December 28 in the district of Bardiya, despite also being warned by area Maoists not to participate.

ANNISU-R FORCES CLOSURE OF MORE SCHOOLS

113. Educational strikes called by the All Nepal National Independent Students' Union-Revolutionary (ANNISU-R), the Maoist-affiliated student organization, have forced additional school closures. In the western district of Baglung alone, the number of schools forced to close has increased to 115. ANNISU-R members have threatened an indefinite shut down if their student leaders are not released by the Government. Thirty-five schools in the remote western district of Mugu shut their doors after ANNISU-R demanded the schools follow a Maoist calendar in place of the government calendar. The closures affect 15,000 students. ANNISU-R has also announced an educational shut-down in the eastern district of Morang for December 29-January 2, to protest alleged incidents of violence by security forces against unarmed students. The militant student wing has ordered all schools in the region to close.

HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST MURDERED; CIVILIANS SUFFER AT HANDS OF MAOISTS

114. On December 30, a pregnant woman reportedly was murdered by Maoists in the eastern district of Sarlahi. A human rights activist with the Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC), a private NGO, was murdered on December 25 in Banke District, a Maoist stronghold. Maoists are suspected to be responsible. Maoists reportedly killed a Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) cadre on December 28. On December 27, rebels killed a civilian in Kailali District reportedly following a dispute over extortion demands. A teacher, reportedly abducted by Maoists on December 21, was found dead on December 23. Rebels abducted him after accusing him of being an informant for security forces. A Nepali Congress (NC) worker reportedly was hacked to death by Maoists on December 19 in Dhanusha District. He had been abducted several days earlier.

115. Maoists reportedly abducted three civilians on December 25 in Sindhupalchowk and a farmer in Salyan on December 29. Four other farmers were abducted on December 24 in Pyuthan District. Rebels also abducted a civilian in Rautahat, accusing him of spying for the RNA.

MAOISTS STRAPPED FOR CASH?

116. Maoists reportedly robbed several banks this week, and demanded ransom for detainees in their custody. On December 30, a group of armed Maoists stole computers, jewelry and USD 4000 from a bank in Chitwan. On December 24, insurgents stole local currency worth USD 6500 from a bank in Urlabari.

117. On December 29, Maoists reportedly abducted the father of a journalist in the western district of Surkhet after stealing USD 400 from him. The rebels are demanding a ransom of USD 4000 for his release. Press accounts from Khotang District report that rebels in that region have demanded almost USD 5000 from family members for the release of people abducted by the insurgents to face various charges in the Maoists' so-called "Peoples' Courts." On December 24, Maoists boarded a bus in Jhapa District and robbed passengers of over USD 3000. On December 22, Maoists reportedly bombed a steel factory in Bara District after the owner refused to meet their extortion demands.

MALINOWSKI